

# U. S. M.

## The Annual Report of Postmaster General Patton.

### HATTON'S REPORT.

The annual report of the postmaster general for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1884, is completed, and for the first time made public. Introducing his report with "a well-deserved tribute to the assistants and various chiefs for efficient service and valuable aid," the secretary first makes the

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT.**  
The total expenditures made on account of the service of the fiscal year ended June 30, 1884, were \$4,401,969.63. The revenues for the year were as follows:

1. Ordinary postal revenue, \$12,818,635.60  
2. Net revenue from money-order business, 519,492.08

43,388,127.68

Excess of expenditures over receipts, 3,066,833.57

To which is added the sum of \$5,204,841.12

The revenues were \$2,170,555.53, or more than 47 per cent less than those of the previous year; the decrease being attributable to the reduction of letter postage from 3 cents, which took effect October 1, 1883.

In addition to the amount expended for the service of the year, \$10,489,000 was paid on account of liabilities of previous years, making the total amount disbursed during the year (exclusive of credits to the Pacific railroads) \$17,678,000.

The amount paid to postmasters was \$11,283,830.87, an increase of \$68,439.41 over that of the previous year for the same purpose. This expenditure was \$333,830.87 in excess of the appropriation.

For railroad transportation the audited expenditures and estimated liabilities for the service of the year ending June 30, 1884, were \$1,076,076.07, or \$34,076.07 less than the total disbursements and estimated liabilities. Estimated receipts for 1885, \$1,272,820.24; estimated expenditures for 1885, \$1,076,076.07; deficiency to be supplied from the general treasury, \$248,320.24.

An estimate of the revenue for the ensuing fiscal year is attended with great uncertainty, because of the reduction of letter postage to two cents, which took effect on the 1st of October, 1883. At this rate of postage the operation during three-quarters only of the last fiscal year, its effect was felt upon the revenue for the entire year; the sales of stamps for the quarter ending September 30, 1883, having been greatly curtailed in view of the then approaching reduction in the rate. Thus the sales for that quarter under the three-cent rate amounted to \$10,839,693.38, while the average for the three succeeding quarters was \$10,220,781.38.

**REDUCTION IN THE RATE OF POSTAGE.**  
The past year marked an important epoch in the history of the postal service, through the reduction in the letter rate of postage from three to two cents, taking effect on the 1st of October, 1883, under the provisions of the act of March 3, 1879, which provided for a gradual reduction of the letter rate of postage, and which was effected by far the larger portion of the postal revenue, the change, of course, produced an immediate falling off in the receipts. The ordinary revenue of the year, as estimated June 30, 1884, was \$2,170,555.53, or less than that of the preceding year. To this loss, however, of course, he added that the natural increase in the sales of stamps, which had remained in force, though the three-cent rate was in force during the quarter ended September 30, 1883, the sales of stamps, for that quarter, were \$1,272,820.24, or less than the average for the three remaining quarters under the two-cent rate; the anticipated increase in the rate having led to a serious falling off in the sale of stamps. That the loss of revenue was not greater must be regarded as gratifying, in view of the fact that the change was based on the first of the year of about \$3,000,000. It is evident the reduction has been fully verified, that the reduced rate of postage has produced a corresponding reduction in the revenue, and has led to the substitution of sealed inclosures for postal cards and other circulars. The increase in the number of letters carried, however, has not been commensurate with the reduction in the rate of postage, having no statistics to show the number of pieces of each of the several classes of matter mailed, and the same kind of stamps being used indiscriminately for the various classes of matter. Neither do the statistics furnish any guide, since postmasters are not required to report the amount in the aggregate and not in detail of the several kinds and denominations.

In postal rates there was a decrease in the issue of 16,400,000, or 4.5 per cent, for the year ended June 30, 1884, as compared with the previous year. During the preceding five years there has been an average annual increase of 16 per cent.

**VARIOUS MAIL MATTER.**  
The amount of postage collected on second-class matter during the year was \$1,889,522.14, an increase of \$184,414.01, or 10.3 per cent, over the previous year.

The number of letters and parcels sent through the registered mails during the year was 1,340,545, of which \$6,088,338 were domestic letters, 4,000,000 were letters addressed to foreign countries. The amount of a registry fee only was \$307,059.30, an increase of \$20,000.00, or 3.3 per cent, over the previous year.

The actually assessed losses during the year numbered 816, or one in every 21,791 letters and parcels sent through the registered mails. The loss in this class of mail is a smaller proportion of loss than in any previous year, and shows increasing efficiency and fidelity on the part of postal officials in this branch of the service.

The gross receipts of articles of undervalued mail matter during the year were 475,872, an increase of 11.6 per cent over the previous year.

**THE APPOINTMENT DIVISION.**  
Number of offices established during the year, 3,410; discontinued, 1,260; increase of offices established, 191; increase discontinued, 801.

There are 561 departmental offices and employees, and 71,671 postmaster and other officers and agents.

**POSTOFFICES AS SINGULARITIES.**  
At different times during the year a thorough investigation was made, under the direction of the chief postmaster inspector, of all first and second-class offices. The result of these investigations was gratifying to the department. Delinquent and negligent officials were disciplined. The former were removed, and the latter reprimanded and more fully instructed in their duties. In a large number of cases where the postmaster was found to be delinquent in his duties, it was owing to negligence or a lack of ability to manage the affairs of their offices. Too many stations were found to be in need of reorganization, and in some cases it was found to be necessary to remove the postmaster and appoint a more efficient one.

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The system was extended during the year to the cities of Chattanooga, Tenn.; Los

Angela, Cal.; Montgomery, Ala.; Ottumwa, Iowa; and Stratton, Pa., making the total number 150. The number of carriers was increased 219, making a total of 3,280 at the close of the year. The appropriation for this service was \$5,514,658.40.

**POSTAL FINANCES.**  
The postage on local matter aggregated \$1,777,484.87, an increase of \$117,745.60, and over the total cost of the service, \$1,273,578.85.

Free deliveries are now accorded only to towns where the population reaches 20,000, or the postal revenue \$20,000. In my judgment the postal revenue should be so changed as to permit the aggregation of population and the postal revenue of these towns, and the service should be extended to them when they meet the requirements of the law. The result would be a diminution in the number of offices and a more satisfactory and economical service.

**CHEAPER POSTAGE.**  
Since, by the figures shown, the postal service is self-sustaining, I can urge with propriety the reduction of letter postage rates to one cent. I am confident that such a change would result in a very considerable increase in the number of local letters mailed, and that the increased revenue would more than offset the greatly impaired thereby as to prevent it from reaching the present amount in a few years.

I also renew the recommendation of my predecessor, that the unit of weight in rating letters and sealed packages (first-class matter) be changed from one-half ounce to one ounce.

**STANDARD DELIVERY.**  
Since in large commercial cities where even the most efficient delivery of the mails is not adequate to the demands of business enterprises requiring prompt transaction, I recommend the use of a special postage stamp for letters and parcels of special delivery, and prompt delivery at free delivery offices. This stamp should be of the denomination of ten cents, and, when affixed to a letter, in addition to the proper postage charge, should insure for it as speedy a delivery as possible at its reception at any letter-carrier office. This additional distribution could be effected by employing the use of the special delivery stamp, and in such numbers as the circumstances should warrant. I am satisfied such an effort to accommodate the public would still further commend the free delivery of letters to its patrons in the large cities where it is in operation.

**POSTMASTER'S SALARIES.**  
The gross receipts of the 2,323 presidential offices for the four quarters ended March 31, 1884, amounted to \$33,037,073.34, or 74.8 per cent of the total revenue of the department for the same period. The aggregate salaries of presidential postmasters amounted to \$3,287,700, or 11.59 per cent of the gross receipts for the same period.

The appropriation for clerks in postoffices for the present fiscal year is inadequate for the service. The department has been obliged to make a reduction in the number of clerks within the limited appropriation. Although this reduction was necessary, it was an apparent injustice to many postmasters whose salaries were reduced.

I endorse as applicable to postmasters the secretary of war's expressions on the subject of postmaster's bonds, viz: They should be permitted by law as security for the faithful performance of their duties, and should be required for the purpose of indemnifying employers in this manner.

The revenue from the rent of presidential postoffices is divided between the department and the postmaster.

In my opinion the law should be so amended as to place the entire box-rent revenue to the postmaster, and the postmaster should be required to pay the rent of the room or the space occupied by the boxes.

A more practical and a much more just system than the present would be one in which the postmaster should be required to provide the necessary box outlets, pay the rent of buildings, and receive the full amount of box-rent at all the presidential offices.

The present system of neglecting no provision for the protection of mails in transit, and providing, at no inconsiderable expense, for best and most approved locks for mail bags and mail boxes, is a commendable one.

It is the duty of the government to provide for the security of the mails placed in postoffice boxes accessible to the general public, and to provide for the security of the mails placed in postoffice boxes accessible to the general public, and to provide for the security of the mails placed in postoffice boxes accessible to the general public.

I am of the opinion that the government should provide buildings and proper facilities for the service of the mails, and should provide for the security of the mails placed in postoffice boxes accessible to the general public, and to provide for the security of the mails placed in postoffice boxes accessible to the general public.

**EXTENT AND COST OF TRANSPORTATION, JUNE 30, 1884.**  
The statistics of the inland mail service, June 30, 1884, are as follows: The number of routes in the star service was 117.9, the length of the routes, 10,400 miles, the annual transportation, \$1,109,052 miles at a cost of \$6,089,491 being about 6.28 cents per mile. The number of routes in the steamboat service was 17, the length of the routes, 10,400 miles, the annual transportation, \$1,109,052 miles at a cost of \$6,089,491 being about 6.28 cents per mile. The number of routes in the railroad service was 1,777, the length of the routes, 117,100 miles, the annual transportation, \$1,109,052 miles at a cost of \$6,089,491 being about 6.28 cents per mile.

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vice will not attain to any higher grade of perfection until this legislation is effected.

**PARTIAL SERVICE.**  
During the past year the service on the transcontinental lines has been materially improved. For some years the New York Central and Hudson River railway and the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern railway have been running a fast train, leaving New York at 8:30 a. m. and arriving at Toledo, Ohio, at 4:30 p. m. of the following day, making connection with the fast mail train on the Washington, St. Louis and Pacific railway, and a direct connection for St. Louis. The mails for Chicago and the west, which formerly arrived at Toledo in the train, were held there about thirty hours, and then sent by a slow train to Chicago, arriving there at 8 a. m.

Commencing Sunday, March 9, 1884, an arrangement was made with the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern railway company whereby the train leaving New York at 8:30 p. m. was continued through Toledo to Chicago as a special fast mail train, arriving at the latter point at 12:35 a. m. In connection with this arrangement was made with the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railway company to put out a special fast mail train to leave Chicago at 8 a. m. arriving at Omaha at 7 p. m. of the same day. This arrangement was not effected until March 11, 1884.

The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railway company also put on a fast mail train, leaving Chicago at 8 a. m., arriving at St. Paul at 3:30 p. m., and at Minneapolis at 4 p. m. This train commenced running March 11, 1884.

In connection with the fast mail train on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railway, the Illinois Central railway company changed the schedule of its mail train, leaving Chicago at 8 a. m., arriving at St. Paul at 3:30 p. m., and at Minneapolis at 4 p. m. This train commenced running March 11, 1884.

By a change of schedule secured upon the Union and Central Pacific railway, which took place upon the establishment of a fast mail train on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railway, a gain of one business day was made at San Francisco. The mail leaving Chicago at 8 a. m. arrived at San Francisco at 7:40 a. m., instead of 8:50 p. m., as formerly. Since the change of schedule the mail has been changed, and this mail now arrives at San Francisco at 11:10 a. m.

The mail for St. Paul and Minneapolis city delivered at the depot at 8 a. m. of the day of arrival at those places and given to the carriers at the depot, thus enabling them to make their delivery before the close of the business day. This mail has been changed, and this mail now arrives at San Francisco at 11:10 a. m.

A change of schedule was secured on the Northern Pacific railway, leaving Chicago at 8 a. m., arriving at St. Paul at 3:30 p. m., and at Minneapolis at 4 p. m. This train commenced running March 11, 1884.

The mail for St. Paul and Minneapolis city delivered at the depot at 8 a. m. of the day of arrival at those places and given to the carriers at the depot, thus enabling them to make their delivery before the close of the business day. This mail has been changed, and this mail now arrives at San Francisco at 11:10 a. m.

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